

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 03469 141206Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 ORM-02 DEAE-00 CIAE-00
INR-07 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05
OES-06 OMB-01 AID-05 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /086 W
-----141351Z 032854 /46

R 141120Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9235
INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI
AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 3469

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SNAR, TH, BM
SUBJ: REMOVAL OF SUA AND SSIA TROOPS FROM THAILAND

1. AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI REPORTS THAT DEA SOURCES IN CHIANG MAI HAVE BEEN TOLD BY A HIGH-RANKING BORDER PATROL POLICE OFFICER THAT BPP HAD RECENTLY FINISHED NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SHAN UNITED ARMY (SUA) AND SHAN STATE INDEPENDENCE ARMY (SSIA) REGARDING WITHDRAWAL OF THESE GROUPS INTO BURMA. THE PROPOSED DATE FOR THE REMOVAL, ACCORDING TO BPP SOURCE, IS FEB 21. EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE IS PLANNED WITH LOCAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS AS WELL AS RTG OFFICIALS FROM BANGKOK IN ATTENDANCE. BPP HELICOPTERS ARE REPORTEDLY TO BE USED IN THE REMOVAL TO TRANSPORT THE INFIRM. THE BPP OFFICER COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED THE ATTENDANT PUBLICITY WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT THAILAND DOES NOT GIVE OPEN SANCTUARY TO BURMESE DISSIDENT GROUPS.

2. AMCONSUL UNDERSTANDS THAT THE PROPOSED REMOVAL CONCERNS DISSIDENT TROOPS ONLY; DEPENDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE LIVING AT BAN HIN TAEK AND OTHER ESTABLISHED CAMPS. SUA AND SSIA TROOPS WILL ALSO BE PERMITTED TO RETURN
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 03469 141206Z

FOR OCCASIONAL VISITS TO THEIR FAMILIES, AS LONG AS THEY CROSS THE BORDER UNARMED.

3. COMMENT: WE CONCLUDE THAT, ALTHOUGH REMOVAL OF ACTIVE SUA AND SSIA TROOPS FROM THAI SOIL IS A GESTURE DESIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE TO GUB THAT THAILAND IS SERIOUS IN ITS ATTEMPTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS, ITS EFFECTS WILL BE PRIMARILY COSMETIC.

IN THE PRESENT CASE THE SUA AND SSIA
WILL BE RETURNING TO AREA EFFECTIVELY BEYOND GUB CONTROL.
WE PRESUME THAT, SHOULD THEY ENCOUNTER SERIOUS HARASSMENT
FROM GUB FORCES, THEY WILL RETREAT INTO THAILAND IF
NECESSARY. SINCE SUA AND SSIA EXIST PRIMARILY FOR SMUGGLING AND
NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING, MOVING SUA TROOPS BACK INTO BURMA
WILL HAVE ONLY A SHORT-TERM EFFECT ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING
PATTERNS. UNTIL THE SUA SSIA EFFECTIVELY NEUTRALIZED (SOME-
THING BEYOND THE CAPABILITY OF THE GUB WITH OR WITHOUT THAI
COOPERATION), NO LASTING RESULTS FROM THE PRESENTLY-PRO-
JECTED REMOVAL ARE ANTICIPATED.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 14-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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